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TO CALIFORNIA

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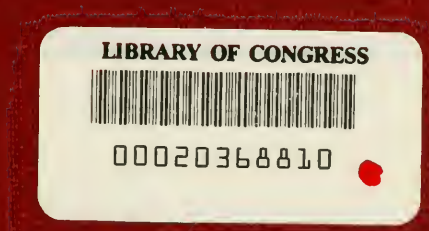
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EARLY VOYAGES

— TO —

CALIFORNIA.

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THE

EARLY DAYS AND RAPID GROWTH

OF

CALIFORNIA.

BY

ALFRED PEABODY.

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ON THE EARLY DAYS AND RAPID GROWTH OF CALIFORNIA.

It may not be generally recollected that California was ceded in 1848 by Mexico to the United States, she paying fifteen million dollars. The treaty between the two governments was signed by the United States in March of the same year, and by Mexico in May.

At that time the extent of the gold fields was not known, though in January it was at first discovered by a man digging a mill-race for Capt. Sutter, who at that time wned the land on which Sacramento City now stands.

When the news of the discovery of gold reached here, *a* the isthmus, in early summer, it was credited but by *a* very few. Soon several parcels were sent here, and large shipments, with letters from well known residents there, confirming the fact, and with these came also accounts of a large immigration from the region around California, even from the Sandwich Islands and Chili.

The scarcity and high price of provisions, mining implements, houses, lumber, etc., at a place where the returns were gold, greatly aroused the spirit of enterprise, and late in the autumn companies in many of the seaboard cities were formed, and vessels purchased to take cargo and passengers round Cape Horn, there being only one steamer monthly between California and New York, *via* the Isthmus.

About the first of December, 1848, I applied to John Bertram, Esq., to undertake a voyage there, which resulted in himself and five other gentlemen of Salem

loading the bark Eliza,[1] Capt. A. S. Perkins, with an assorted cargo, and I went out in her to dispose of it, and to establish myself as a commission merchant.

The cargo consisted of flour, pork, hams, sugar, coffee, butter, cheese, rice, figs, raisins, dried apples, bread, meal, pickles, boots, shoes, domestics, chairs, nails, cook stoves, bake pans, kettles, axes, shovels, picks, and a great variety of small articles, lumber, and not of least importance, a store, also materials for building a boat or scow, for dredging in the rivers or on sand bars, together with a small steam engine, a lathe, and tools for repairs. There were six passengers, Messrs. John Beadle, Jonathan Nichols, Dennis Rideout, George Buffum, George Kenny and James Parker, all of Salem. One of these was a boat builder, one a carpenter, and two machinists. These were selected from numerous applicants, with a view to carry out our plans on arrival if they were found to be practicable. The "Eliza" was the first vessel that sailed from Massachusetts with an assorted cargo and passengers direct for San Francisco, though Capt. Eagleston was loading the Brig "Mary and Ellen" for the Sandwich Islands when the gold discoveries were confirmed, and he changed her voyage to San Francisco and the Sandwich Islands, and cleared from Salem Oct. 27th.

On the morning of our sailing from Derby wharf, Dec.

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[1] The "Eliza" was built at Salem, in 1822, by Thomas and David Magoun, for Joseph White; sold by his heirs in 1832 to David Pingree, and again in 1846 to Michael Shepard and others. Tonnage, 204 tons. For several years previous in the Zanzibar trade.

The officers and crew were, *Captain*, Augustine Staniford Perkins, now residing in Salem; *first officer*, Joseph Perkins, who bought a farm at Clipper Gap, California, and has since lived at that place; *second officer*, William Hunt. *Seamen*, Amos Niles, Leander J. Johnson, Ebenezer Fox, William Smith, Henry C. Perkins, Abel Martin, and John Lambert.

23, 1848, a great crowd had assembled to take leave of friends, and to give a hearty hurrah. Just as they were casting off the bark's fasts a song,[2] composed for the occasion by some friends of one of the passengers, was struck up by him,

"The wash bowl on my knee,"

Tune, OH! SUSANNA. (Key G.)

1. [2]I came from Salem City,
With my washbowl on my knee,
I'm going to California,
The gold dust for to see.
It rained all night the day I left,
The weather, it was dry,
The sun so hot I froze to death,
Oh! brothers, don't you cry.
Oh! California,
That's the land for me!
I'm going to Sacramento
With my washbowl on my knee.

2. I jumped aboard the 'Liza ship,
And travelled on the sea,
And every time I thought of home
I wished it wasn't me!
The vessel reared like any horse
That had of oats a wealth;
I found it wouldn't throw me, so
I thought I'd throw myself.
Oh! California, etc.

3. I thought of all the pleasant times
We've had together here,
I thought I ort to cry a bit,
But couldn't find a tear.
The pilot bread was in my mouth,
The gold dust in my eye,
And though I'm going far away
Dear brothers, don't you cry.
Oh! California, etc.

4. I soon shall be in Francisco,
And then I'll look all round,
And when I see the gold lumps there
I'll pick them off the ground.
I'll scrape the mountains clean, my boys,
I'll drain the rivers dry,
A pocket full of rocks bring home,
So, brothers, don't you cry.
Oh! California, etc.

and the passengers joined in the chorus. This was called the "California Song," and was sung on board of every vessel going round Cape Horn, and by immigrants over the plains. It was afterwards published in a London Quarterly as a Californian miner's song, illustrative of camp life at the diggings.

After letting go our fasts the bark grounded, a rope was passed from on board to the spectators on the wharf, and hundreds of them laid hold of it with such a gusto that they walked her off as if a powerful tug boat had hold of her.

The voyage from the coast was without any very bad weather, and we had a pleasant set of passengers, rather musical withal—one played the violin, another the accordeon, a third the tamborine, and I played skilfully on the triangle. When we passed near a vessel we would give them the California song, with all the accompaniments.

Anxiety to get out before other vessels, soon to follow us with similar cargoes, stimulated Capt. Perkins to take advantage of every wind, and even the gales, when favorable, and when struggling off Cape Horn I often wished the bark was twenty years younger. Our voyage in the Pacific was a very pleasant one, and much of our time was occupied in building a boat for exploration up the river.

We arrived at San Francisco, June 1, 1849, one hundred and sixty days passage, and anchored about nine, P.M. We went on shore the next morning, landing on an old wharf about forty feet long, the only one in the place. Our first inquiry was if the gold held out, and we were much pleased to learn that before we left home the half had not been told. The city had a very new and unsettled appearance, the streets ran at right angles,

uneven, and no sidewalks, some quite comfortable dwellings, a hotel on one side of the public square, and on the opposite was the custom house; a very rough-looking building, built of adobe or sun-dried bricks. It was one story only, and had a veranda all round it. The shops were mostly of rough boards, their contents articles of first necessity, mining tools and cooking utensils. Every one seemed to be busily employed, opening goods, selling and packing them for shipment. The mines being from one hundred and fifty to two hundred miles distant from San Francisco, all goods had to be taken in small vessels up to Sacramento City and to Stockton, and then distributed to different mining points.

In these early days of California, United States laws had not been introduced there, and it was found necessary, in such a mixed population, for the safety of life and property, to establish Lynch law. Any one caught stealing would be strung up on the nearest tree. Going on shore the second morning after we arrived, some persons in a store were telling of their exploits the night before. A man was suspected of a robbery committed a few days before. He was taken by several persons to a tree near by, a rope put round his neck, and he was hoisted nearly from the ground, but his earnest protestations of innocence moved the hearts of his accusers, and they felt that they had made a mistake in the person and let him go. This was rather an unpleasant procedure, and if mistakes of this kind should often occur, I felt that even a quiet man from Salem would be hardly secure.

It was surprising to see how trade and every kind of business were rushed through without regard to the Sabbath. Taking samples of some of our cargo on shore to try the market, the owner of the first store I went into was so busy he could not attend to me that day, so I pro-

posed calling the next day, Saturday. "No," he said, "come Sunday." I replied that I never did business on Sunday. "Oh well!" said he, "you have just arrived; after you have been here a month you will do as we do." I replied that if no other man in California kept the Sabbath, I should. "You are right," he said; "I wish I stood in your position, but I have gone with the crowd, and I cannot well stop."

As freights from San Francisco to Sacramento City, the head of navigation of that river, were very high, a great saving would be made by taking the "Eliza" up with her cargo. No vessel of her draft of water had ever gone up. After consulting with one of the best pilots on the river, we concluded to go up with her, and agreed with him to pilot her up, after lightening her a little, and he was to accompany her with a large schooner, to take the cargo in case she grounded, for which we paid him one thousand, seven hundred and twenty-five dollars, a heavy pilotage for one hundred and twenty miles. We worked our way up the river, grounding several times, but by heeling the bark, by changing her cargo, chains and anchors, we got her off without discharging any cargo, and in six days after we left San Francisco we moored her to two sturdy oak trees, at the foot of one of the principal streets, where she remained for years, having quite a history, as she was used as a store, a store house, a boarding house, and later, for years as a landing for steamers, in 1868 sold and broken up; most of the timbers and planking were in good condition.

The first outlook on a town of seven buildings and a few tents was not very encouraging to sell a valuable cargo like ours. It was evident from the dusty roads that there was not a little travel, and it must have been for trade, so on looking round we gained courage.

The Plat on which the city was located was covered with

large oaks, and oak underbrush. The streets were laid out at right angles, one, upwards from west easterly, and A to Z from north southerly.

We had struck off, at a printing place at Sutter's Fort a mile distant, fifty lists, costing fifty dollars, of the principal articles of our cargo fresh from Salem, and these were sent into the mines, the only means of advertising.

Our crew, all except two faithful boys, left us on arrival. The passengers, on whom we had some claims, went up the river in the boat we built, for the purpose of examining the shallow rivers and bars. They returned in two or three days with unfavorable reports for mining in this mode, which was not unwelcome news, as by that time we had all we could attend to, in waiting on customers for our cargo. It was put up in the best manner, and it was for months alluded to, as the best cargo that had come to California, and customers came down upon us with a rush.

Capt. Perkins, having been well schooled in the Zanzibar trade, made himself very useful, and we made some outside operations on joint account, renewing our stock of goods as we sold out.

The safe arrival up there of so large a vessel as the "Eliza" induced almost every one of light draft of water to follow, and in a short time there were lying alongside the river bank, at every favorable point, twenty-five or thirty vessels, and later Salem was well represented.

On entering the Sacramento river the mosquitoes gave us a warm reception. They were very poisonous, and so persistent we could not eat our meals with comfort. One of the boys had his face so badly stung that he could not see, and I passed several hours in the vessel's top, that I might have a little respite.

A great variety of nationalities would be seen, and some would be almost wild to get to the mines. There

was no conveyance except for a few who could purchase a horse or mule, and most miners were obliged to walk forty or fifty miles, some taking a shovel and pick and a slight change of clothing. Expenses were very high, and no one could afford to be idle, and no one ought to be, for wages were sixteen dollars a day.

The first Saturday night after we arrived, being very tired, I arranged to be allowed to sleep in the morning without being disturbed, but at daylight I was called for something very important; going on deck I found three men and their mules on the river bank, waiting to purchase goods and load up for the mines, and when I told them I did not sell goods on the Sabbath they used very rough language, and this gave me liberty to advise them to keep the Sabbath to prolong their lives and that of their mules, assuring them that it would be better for both, and if they would do so and come at the same hour the next morning, they should be well served. They went away declaring that they would not trade with such a puritanical hypocrite, but it seems they thought better of it, and came as invited, and after coming two or three times for goods they made me their banker, depositing in my safe thousands of dollars.

The immigrants were of almost every profession and vocation — judges, lawyers, physicians, clergymen, and artisans of every kind. It was amusing, though praiseworthy, to see them turning their hands to anything to earn a few dollars. I wanted some lumber hauled a short distance; sending for a man who owned a yoke of oxen, I was surprised to have him report himself Professor Shepherd, of New Haven, Conn. He did all the work himself and in a few days earned fifty dollars. I found him a very pleasant acquaintance, and a most excellent man, as well as a good geologist. Hearing that a clergy-

man had come in town, he ventured to invite him to preach on board a bark, but the saw and hammer, driving of teams, discharging and loading of goods all around, were a great disturbance.

The Professor prevailed on me to join him in visiting the vessels and venders of goods, to urge them to refrain from doing business on the Sabbath, to which they all consented; and every one acknowledged that it was the pleasantest day they had passed in California. Service that day was held in a blacksmith's shop, which proved too small to accommodate all. The next Sunday it was held under a gigantic oak, the trunk of which measured twenty-seven feet in circumference.

Seats, boards laid on nail kegs. On this Sabbath Mr. Ball, son of our city missionary in Salem at that time, appeared with a cabinet organ. This drew quite a crowd, and after service the musical gentlemen, some members of the Handel and Hayden society of Boston, gathered around the organ and sang their old favorite tunes with the greatest enthusiasm.

A man near our vessel worked under an oak tree making rough board coffins; he was the only man that would not regard the Sabbath. When we returned from church he boasted of having earned sixteen dollars while we were gone. One of his coffins was taken for him before the close of summer.

The conveyance to the mines was greatly facilitated by the arrival in September of the immigration over land from the western states, furnishing a great number of ox teams, horses and mules, which made it less expensive for the miners.

The immigrants from Missouri, Illinois and Indiana would more easily conform to rough life than those from the eastern states. The females and children were brought

over the mountains in ox wagons, covered, and in and around them were sufficient cooking utensils and furniture to commence their new life. Some of the old pioneers cut down oak trees and cut them in convenient lengths to split, which they used for boarding their houses and also for shingles. Some very fine horses were introduced from Missouri.

A Mr. Flint, of Maine, drove, from one of the western states over the mountains, a flock of sheep, the first of fine wool introduced into California, and now he is the largest sheep owner there, and is very rich.

By this time rough buildings and tents nearly covered several blocks, settlers were arriving daily, and it was a very busy place, with favorable prospects of becoming a commercial city. Among new comers was a man desirous of opening a restaurant, there not being any in the place. We put him up a building of boards eighteen by thirty feet, and covered it with sails from the "Eliza;" rent two hundred dollars per month. This was hardly finished when a doctor came and wished us to build for him one of the same dimensions, to occupy as an apothecary; rent two hundred and fifty dollars per month. Immediately a gentleman applied for a store which he must have in three days, as his goods were to be landed on the bank of the river, and the third day he moved into it; rent three hundred dollars per month. These three buildings were put up by Mr. Rideout, one of our passengers, which was a good advertisement for him, and from that time he never lacked work. He left for home in December, well paid for his six months' work in California. At Panama he took the fever and died. He was attended by a kind Salem man, though a stranger.

On the street and on where we built these stores, we cut down a thick growth of oak underbrush, and in six

weeks, that street with others was watered by a water cart.

Quite a number of families had come in, and Prof. Shepherd collected the children and had a Sabbath school in a little shanty he built of poles and boards. The ground was the floor, and seats pine boards, but we found the children learned as well in it as if under a frescoed ceiling.

Lumber, canvas and cotton cloth having come in freely, some large buildings had been erected; the most costly were used as gambling houses, and of these there were not a few.

Many large groceries were in canvas tents, and it is worthy of note that though they could have been easily cut into and robbed any dark night, I have no recollection of any robbery while I was in Sacramento. On board the "Eliza" we never locked our hatches. So much for Dr. Lynch.

From materials on board the "Eliza," we built two scows, one to be used as a ferry boat across the Sacramento river, the first one in the place, and the other for a German to take his vegetables to market. This man had about an acre cultivated, about four miles below the city. This was an experiment, there not being any other land cultivated anywhere round, and it proved a success. Capt. Perkins went down in his boat and purchased potatoes at sixty dollars per bushel, and other vegetables proportionably high, of which he sold enough at a profit to give us a taste without cost. We, however, indulged in a little extravagance as well as experiment. Taking a squash at two dollars, eggs two dollars per dozen, and milk two dollars per gallon, we made some pies. These reminded us of home and paid us for the trouble. A bag containing about two bushels of onions on the way to the mines passed through our hands at eighty-five dollars.

Prof. Shepherd, while prospecting among the mountains, always carried his blankets for his covering at night, his saddle served as a pillow, and the earth as a mattress. All travellers were obliged to camp out in this way. This exposure and irregular living carried off great numbers the first year in California.

Occasionally an old resident of California came along and spoke of having seen the location of Sacramento under water, but ten to one contradicted these reports, and we thought it could not be true; but when the rainy season came, the river above the city overflowed, and ran in back of it, flooding it all except high ridges. This was a severe blow to the place, causing a great depreciation in real estate, and was proof that it would never be a rival to San Francisco. The next season the water rose much higher than before, inundating the whole city, carrying away houses and furniture. On the trees down below Sacramento near the river, chairs were seen hanging some fifteen feet from the ground. For several days no one could leave their houses, except in boats and on rafts, and in many places they would step from the second story into boats. The city has since been raised, I think ten feet. It is perfectly secure now from floods.

Dec. 1, 1850. My attention was turned to San Francisco to meet Mr. J. P. Flint from Boston, who came out to join me in business, and we formed a partnership under the style of Flint & Peabody. We built a store within thirty feet of the wharf on which we at first landed. While our store was building, two gentlemen, my partner and myself, hired a shanty, one room and kitchen. In one corner we had a table, and when our mattresses were spread on the floor at night it was entirely covered. Some of us were quite accustomed to this mode of life, which was far better than hundreds

around us, living in tents, and there were several hundred of these.

The city had improved greatly in appearance in the few months past, many buildings having been erected, among which were a city hall, a large banking house, a Baptist church — the first Protestant church built in California. I have in my possession a photograph of the original building sent me by a friend last month. A company from Salem had arrived in a ship, and put up a very large building which they rented. That season was a very wet one, none of the streets were paved, and in some low places no teams could pass, and pedestrians often found the longest boots too short.

There was a great accumulation of various articles of merchandise, utterly unsalable, and of so little value, not having store room, they were left out exposed to weather. In one of the worst crossings some half dozen or more boxes of tobacco, one hundred and twenty pounds weight, were placed; also barrels of spoiled provisions. Gold washers, which came out in almost every vessel, and were of no value, were used as stepping stones.

The harbor presented a lively appearance. Some one hundred and fifty to two hundred vessels of different nations were anchored in the bay, and some had been beached to be used for the sale of their cargoes. A wharf eight hundred feet long had been built. Lumber arriving daily had fallen in price, so as to induce a great amount of building, some very large gambling houses, and there were many of them which were well patronized night and day, and seemed to be the only place of amusement for the idle.

In the spring of 1850, a great fire burned over three blocks. It spread so rapidly but little merchandise was saved; every gambling house and saloon was burned. I

think the fire occurred on Thursday. On the Sunday morning following, on our way to church, we passed a building, the only one put up since the fire, and we heard the jingling of the specie on the table, which seemed to be in defiance of the Almighty.

The favorable accounts we gave Mr. Bertram on our arrival induced him to engage in this trade with his accustomed energy. In early spring three vessels arrived with full cargoes, loaded at Salem by Mr. Bertram, and soon after two others followed. We had several other cargoes consigned which kept us occupied.

Capt. Perkins settled up his business and left for home in the June steamer *via* the Isthmus. He was the first that fulfilled the promise of the song,

"A pocket full of rocks bring home."

We were greatly surprised one day at the arrival of two small clipper tea ships, with assorted cargoes from New York, in little over one hundred days. These short passages created quite an excitement, and every one realized the advantage of having their goods come by fast sailing ships.

The gold covering a vast surface of country was an established fact, and could not be exhausted for years. My partner proposed my returning home, and establishing a line of fast ships from Boston, which would command high freights and result in a profitable business. I took the first July steamer to Panama, crossed the Isthmus on a mule, came down the Chagres river in a canoe burned out of a large log, and arrived home in thirty-six days.

Mr. Flint's son was taken into our firm and the style has since been Flint, Peabody & Co. No line from Boston had been established, and seeing the importance of an early movement, an arrangement between our firm and

Messrs. Glidden & Williams to establish one was at once consummated, they to procure freights in Boston, and Flint, Peabody & Co. to collect them in San Francisco, and it was called "Glidden & Williams' Line."

There were but few fast or clipper ships in the United States at that time, and as such ships would command freights at double the price of common ships, it was determined by Mr. Bertram and the owners of the line, with one other firm in Boston, to build an extreme clipper of one thousand, one hundred tons. In September a contract with an East Boston ship builder was made for such a ship, and to have her ready to receive cargo by January 1. Her keel was laid at once, the work progressed satisfactorily, and in due time she was launched. Complimentary to Mr. Bertram, who had been so conspicuous in the California trade, the majority of the owners named her for him, the "John Bertram." She was rigged and fitted for sea, loaded in Glidden & Williams' line, and sailed January 10 with a full cargo, at one dollar per foot or forty dollars per ton. One article of her cargo shipped by her owners was ten thousand dozens of eggs, put up in tins, which sold for ten thousand dollars.

This was the first clipper ship that was built expressly for the California trade. The same owners soon after built the famous clipper ship "Witch of the Wave, of fifteen hundred tons, and subsequently four others of the same model averaging fifteen hundred tons each.

Mr. Bertram and others, with Flint, Peabody & Co., in 1853 established in San Francisco the ice trade, having employed in this five ships, aggregating thirty-three hundred tons. It was afterwards ascertained that ice could be introduced from Sitka at lower rates than from Boston, and they gave up the trade.

June, 1851, a great fire swept over the city. Fifteen

blocks were burned, and eight others partially, occupied by fifteen hundred buildings, estimated loss four million dollars. Flint, Peabody & Co. were burned out; their store was the last building burnt. Their loss was heavy; no insurance.

The line from Boston proved a success, as may be seen by the following statistics, which are copied from the San Francisco almanac of 1859:—

"As an interesting datum in illustration of the changes which have taken place in the commerce of San Francisco, both as regards its nature and its channels, we place the following table before our readers.

It is a statement of the amount paid as freight to, and the number of tons of cargo carried by, and the vessels consigned to a single house, Messrs. Flint, Peabody & Co., commencing with the first ship of that line, the "John Bertram."

AMOUNT OF FREIGHT LIST.

In 1852,	27	ships,	32,959	tons of goods,	$ 854,583 77
1853,	49	"	75,849	" "	1,810,446 29
1854,	30	"	49,727	" "	992,633 29
1855,	26	"	47,681	" "	634,418 93
1856,	26	"	49,499	" "	677,312 57
1857,	24	"	42,791	" "	464,579 69
1858,	25	"	46,892	" "	531,887 01
	207		345,398		$5,965,862 14

Choice fruit, in the early days of California, was almost unknown. I sent out from Boston three hundred pear, three hundred apple, two hundred and fifty peach and one hundred and fifty plum trees, raspberries, currants, etc., all these of the choicest varieties, which we set out on our farm, expecting to realize great profits, but when they came into bearing so many others had done the same thing that fruit could not be marketed to pay expenses.

It may be noticed that from 1854 the quantity of goods

shipped from the east was every year decreasing, as many articles which were formerly shipped from the east were produced there. That has been the case ever since. From July, 1855 to Nov., 1856, one article (East Boston syrup) consigned to our house amounted to $563,588.00. Soon after, sugar refineries were established there, and now they are seeking a market for their surplus syrup.

In 1859 the same house received from Boston a full cargo of flour, sixty-five hundred barrels, which paid a fair freight. In 1869, from July to December 31, the shipments from San Francisco of wheat and flour were equal to one million, six hundred thousand barrels. The same year the wool clip was fifteen million pounds, all of fine quality.

The official returns of the census of 1850 make the population ninety-two thousand, five hundred and ninety-seven. In 1857 the population had increased to five hundred and thirty-eight thousand and two.

As early as 1859 by the "State Register," it appears the "Great Overland" Mail was established from Memphis and St. Louis to San Francisco *via* Fort Smith, to Fort Fillmore above El Paso. Thence to Fort Yuma on the Colorado, to Los Angeles to San Francisco semi-weekly, schedule time twenty-five days. Butterfield & Co., contractors. Also, the Central Overland or Salt Lake City Mail, from St. Joseph, Mo., to Salt Lake, thence through Carson Valley to Placerville, weekly; leaves St. Joseph every Saturday. Schedule time from St. Joseph, twenty-two days. Hockoday & Corpening, contractors.

It appears by the "Register" of the same year that there were one hundred and twenty-seven lodges of Free Masons, and seventy-eight lodges of Odd Fellows; an Agricultural Society, State Horticultural Society, California Society of Natural History, State Medical Society,

Mechanics' Institute, Academy of Natural Science, and thirty-two libraries, containing sixty-five thousand volumes. This does not include the State Library located at San Francisco, the oldest and most extensive in the state, library Santa Clara College, San Jose, Odd Fellows Library Association, San Francisco, Sacramento Library Association and California Pioneer, San Francisco.

There were ninety different newspapers and periodicals published in the state of California; one hundred and thirty-two grist mills; an insane asylum at Stockton, and the United States marine hospital at San Francisco, cost of building, two hundred and twenty-four thousand dollars.

The following shows the value and destination of treasure shipped from San Francisco during the years 1854 to 1869 (sixteen years).

Eastern ports,	$462,088,066
England,	167,703,292
China,	68,050,250
Panama,	9,053,526
Other ports,	17,598,824
	$724,493,958

The amount of duties on imports in 1869 was $8,339,-384.14.

This same year the amount of mining stocks sold at the Exchange Board in San Francisco was $30,037,707. There were also turned out 7,604 tons of new shipping, of which eleven were steamers, three barks, one brig, four barges, and thirty-four schooners. Eight hundred and fifty-eight vessels cleared at the custom house for domestic and foreign ports, 706,452 tons.

In 1873 the arrivals of vessels at San Francisco were 3,647 — 1,293,398 tons.

Among the manufactories, there was built by Flint,

Peabody & Co., and another firm a rope manufactory, making annually three million pounds Manila rope, some of which was twelve hundred feet long, used for hoisting quartz rock out of shafts. They have a barrel factory; one hundred and fifty thousand barrels and half barrels, and one hundred thousand kegs were manufactured in 1873.

The coinage at the branch mint in 1873 amounted to $22,075,400.

Our Boston house bought the railroad iron for the first railway that was built in California, and negotiations were made through them for the first five thousand tons of iron for the Central Pacific railroad, and also for the sale of the first bonds on that road.

At the close of 1869 I withdrew from the firm of Flint, Peabody & Co., after a partnership of twenty years. The house is continued under the same style, by the sons of the senior partner, who died last March.

To show still farther the changes which have taken place, I have ascertained that only two ships have loaded in Boston for San Francisco the present year, 1873. The revolutions in trade and commerce, and the resources which have been developed in agriculture and manufactures in twenty-five years, are beyond parallel in the history of our country or the world.

The following statistics are taken from the "Trade Review":—

Wheat product of 1873,	25,000,000 bushels
Wheat and flour exports in 1873,	10,650.000 centals.
Gold and silver yield in 1873,	$ 82,000,000.
Coinage of San Francisco mint in 1873,	22,075,400.
Coinage of mint from 1854 to Dec. 31, 1873,	350,000,000.
Foreign imports, values of, in 1873,	33,560,000.
Merchandise, export values by sea, in 1873,	31,160,000.
Mining stock sales in 1873,	146,400,000.

Lumber receipts in 1873,	203,330,000 feet.
Wool clip,	36,000,000 pounds.
Domestic coals received in fourteen years,	1,700,000 tons.
Wine products of 1873,	2,500,000 gallons.
Deposits in the California savings banks,	$55,000,000.
Banking capital of the state,	$100,000,000 gold.

The ship "John Bertram" was sold eighteen years ago. She has been running ever since. On the 12th of last month she was in the port of New York, and the captain, her present owner, wrote to a gentleman in this city, speaking of her in the highest terms. He valued her so highly that he wanted the photograph of the person for whom she was named to hang up in his cabin.

Not only did the California trade give birth to the clipper ship, which resulted in the revolution of ship modelling here and abroad (though the extreme clippers were in vogue but a few years, giving place to nearly flat floors, retaining the sharp ends to combine capacity with speed), but innumerable branches of industry were magnified or developed by this trade, and on this 23d of December, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the sailing of the "Eliza" from Salem, it is hard to realize in the great California of to-day, the rough country we landed at in its infancy.

Salem, *Dec.* 23, 1873.

ACCOUNT

OF AN

EARLY CALIFORNIA VOYAGE.

BY

JOHN H. EAGLESTON.

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AN EARLY CALIFORNIA VOYAGE.*

Some eighteen months or two years ago New Bedford claimed the clearing of the first ship from Massachusetts with a cargo for San Francisco, after the discovery of the golden elephant had set the world wild and from every point of the compass thousands rushed to the golden waters in pursuit of fortunes from the earthy bowels of the mighty monster. But some friend, in overhauling the New Bedford log and drifting back to dates, I think through the "Register," gave the Mary & Ellen, of Salem, as first on the list for that port. The two articles were stowed away for safe keeping, but at the present time are not to be found. This I much regret, as I would like to give dates.

I now see, by the "Gazette" of January 21, an article by Mr. Alfred Peabody, my friend and pioneer in gold dust seeking, falling into line with the barque "Eliza," December 23, about two months after my sailing as first vessel from Massachusetts for that port, with a cargo for gold dust hunters; as if my clearing *via* San Francisco, thence to the beautiful groves of cocoanuts and plantains, hove the "Mary & Ellen" a little in the shade. If the terms *via* or direct were in the clearance I cannot say; and believing it is of no consequence, I will in "plane

* We are permitted to insert, in connection with the preceding paper, this account of an early California voyage, in the Brig "Mary & Ellen" from Salem to San Francisco, by Capt. John H. Eagleston.

sailing" give your readers a sketch of my log from my first movement, and let them decide to which of the two the first credit belongs. And as I am docked for repairs of one of my main spars, I will wear away a portion of my dull time, while the slow work goes on.

Owing to severe losses, I found I must move in some direction to make them up; and after much thought on the course to pursue, I decided to buy a fast vessel and proceed to the Pacific.. As I was well acquainted with all ports from St. Carlos to Guayaquil, where sales of any account could be made, I determined to visit San Francisco and ports south, in order to make what sales might be possible, and learn what the show was for a return cargo; thence to Guayaquil and load some seven hundred quintals of cocoa for Manila, where, and in China, through friends, I could load for the Coast, Society and Sandwich Islands. Going to Baltimore I bought of Hooper & Cheesbury the half brig "Zeno," of one hundred and ninety-five tons, for seven thousand dollars cash, and as she was not registered I named her the "Mary & Ellen," after my two daughters. She was at once loaded with corn and flour for J. Safford, Esq., of this city, and, in charge of a Baltimore captain, made the voyage to Salem in three days. The flour was landed in Salem and the corn in Danversport, the last proving to be a job of some days.

As soon as possible I commenced alterations on cabin, and, wanting a young man to take one quarter's interest and go with me, after consulting several parties the situation was disposed of to Mr. John Henry Proctor.

While on the ways for coppering, the California mail arrived, by which Capt. J. W. Chever received a letter from his son Henry, who was in San Francisco, saying gold had been discovered in large quantity, and enclosing

a list of articles wanted for the occasion. This information was kept quiet, and outside of this I heard nothing of gold. But believing the arrival of the next mail would cause a great movement in that direction, the "Mary & Ellen" was placed in position and loaded with as little delay as possible—the Hon. S. C. Phillips, Capt. Chever and J. W. Peele being the principal shippers; Mr. E. H. Knight shipping an invoice on his own hook, and several other friends doing the same. My cargo consisted of beef, pork, flour, hams, blankets, clothing, crowbars, picks, shovels, tin pans, etc., etc.; also liquors and wines of various kinds. These last, on account of ship, A. & C. Cunningham, and S. F. Wyman, of Boston.

Closing up our wants, we sailed on the 28th of October, 1848, direct for the golden fields, having as passengers D. A. Chever and a Mr. Vaughan, the latter having visited California before, and intending to make it his home; my foremast hands being six boys, each having made one voyage to taste the pleasures of sea-sickness. Owing to heavy easterly weather for fourteen days, we made but little headway, and the passage to the line was long. But here I was pleased to learn we were not the only one on long time, as also to see we were not to be left in the rear, as the slow coach of a large southbound fleet, which was pleasant to view as they dropped astern. And from latitude six degrees north to thirty-five degrees south we came up with and passed thirty-six sail on the same course as the "Mary & Ellen."

In our run to the south, an incident occurred, the like of which, I think, was never logged before. We were under double reefs, with an ugly short sea, and a strong breeze a little forward of the starboard beam, the "Mary & Ellen" more under water than above. The second mate, from the starboard bow, struck a porpoise, and

about the same time the brig made a dive and the porpoise was taken on board between the lee cat and knight heads, and landed by the windlass, greatly enraged with the wild leap he had made; and had it not been for this it would have been impossible to save him.

Soon after leaving home, Mr. Proctor had a running sore break out on the end of his forefinger, right hand, with which, and a consumptive cough of old standing, he gently passed from us, and, mourned and lamented by all, under the usual sea forms his remains were committed to ocean's blue tomb, with the long waves of Cape Horn majestically rolling over his once manly form.

With short detention off the Cape, and a full share of adverse and light winds, we arrived at San Francisco at three P. M., March 28, 1849. A show of the elephant was soon on board, the display of golden eggs from the pockets of land-sharks, and their glowing stories of big lumps setting my boys in a high fever for the gold fields. The second night in, my second mate and three of the boys stole the long boat and ran. The next morning, finding my boat on the beach, and a shark from a den a few rods off by her, I informed him the boat was mine. He replied, "all right. I want forty-five dollars for picking her up." Believing his demand for lying over large, I proceeded to the office of the Alcade, and stating the case to him, he said, "You must pay it; there is no law here to help you." I took his advice, paid it, and went on my way rejoicing that the squeeze was no heavier. Seeing I should soon be left without help, my mate having taken his ticket of leave, I increased the cook's pay to three hundred dollars per month, and that of the boys to two hundred and fifty.

My salable cargo was soon disposed of; and that portion not of ready sale I concluded to take up to Oregon,

and put up several notices for passengers. Three were soon on the list, one of them a Judge Pratt. I was now in want of men. But, owing to the sharks fitting them out, and sending them to the mines for a stated time, and receiving one-half of their diggings for the outfit, it was very difficult to find them ready to move from the golden scenes that surrounded their movements; and knowing they were masters of the situation, they had become very independent and exacting in their notions. Running foul of two or three hard looking coons, I hove aback with, "My men, do you wish to ship?" "I don't know, what is the wages?" "Three hundred dollars per month." "We can do better than that; how are we to live?" "On usual ship fare, and have all you can eat." "That won't do. If we go we must have ham, eggs, butter, soft tack and canned meats, and all the liberty we want while in port." Not wishing to submit to furnishing so goldish and gouty a bill of fare, I hauled off to think the matter over. But having an unexpected call from Ross, Benton & Co., to purchase the "Mary & Ellen" for the same voyage, I sold to them for fifteen thousand dollars in gold dust, and, disposing of a few articles to Mr. Pratt, the balance of the cargo was stored on the beach, at one dollar a barrel per month. At this time, for want of inside room, outside storage was large; and although showing every kind of merchandise, not the first article was ever molested. Cost of landing about twelve dollars per ton, and in some instances largely over this figure. Also freight to Sacramento on flour six dollars per barrel, and to Stockton I paid thirty-six dollars on four barrels of pork.

On the 17th of April I made a shipment of gold dust to J. W. Peele, which I believe will prove to be the first on Salem account from that place.

On the first of June I was very pleasantly surprised by a call from Capt. Perkins and Mr. Peabody, they having just arrived in the "Eliza" from Salem. Information and assistance were given to them to forward their movements in pushing up to Sacramento. By request of my friends, I was to breakfast with them on Sunday morning. On my way to where I was to take the boat, I met Lieut. Blair, of old acquaintanceship, and at this time master of the schooner "Sagadahoc," and running up the Sacramento. Knowing he was well acquainted with the river, and must be a good pilot, I invited him to go on board with me. He did so, and it was arranged between the three parties that he should take the ship up, and, as I understood it, was to be accompanied by the schooner, and, in case the "Eliza" mudded at any time, was to be relieved by her. Without loss of time the "Eliza" was off, my friends delighted at what they had seen of the elephant, and, I have no doubt, rejoicing over the larger show in store for them. In this movement up these beautiful inland waters, I think they will head the list as first vessel of the "Eliza" class and draught that ever ascended the Sacramento river.

On board of the "Eliza" there were quite a number of passengers. Several of these remaining in San Francisco pitched their tent in Happy Valley, where Mr. Jonathan Nichols, stored as he was with fun and song, assisted by his social and free hearted companions, made their quarters at all times inviting and pleasant. I was often with them, and under evening's beautiful sky, did the echo of good singing please the squatters that composed the little beehive villages which dotted the valley, especially with "The Washbowl on my Knee," which was the usual wind-up.

My affairs squared up, I took passage, in company with Capt. N. Batchelder, of this city, on board the steamer

Oregon, Capt. B., about the first of July, for Panama,—passage per head two hundred and fifty dollars. The third day out we were put upon ship-made water, right from the receiving tanks, beautifully hot, and as rusty as an old anchor of twenty years' use. This we thought to be a dodge, by those interested, to force the sale of ale, which now became large at one dollar per bottle. Our table was also very scanty in supply; and although we touched at several places where water and supplies were handy and plenty, not the first show of either was obtained.

One knot more and we leave the Oregon, with her lockers cleared out. On a line with our course, and well to the south, lay a shoal which was not on the ship's charts; but on board were two passengers, a lieutenant in the United States navy and a coast captain who were well acquainted with the shoal, and by them Capt. B. was informed of its existence and position. Of this little notice was taken, and with a show of all confidence in a clear sea before us, the ship under full power was driving onward, ten to eleven miles per hour. The day was pleasant, without sufficient air to ruffle the ocean's glassy surface, when, about eleven P.M., the first officer playing booby in an armchair, and the watch following his example, while fortunately several cabin passengers were still moving about the deck, one of them an old ship-master; both of steam and canvas, seeing the ship was entering rippling water, jumped on the bridge, saw our danger, and pulled the bell for a stern board. This saved us, and although she struck quite heavily, she was soon backed off, and saved from becoming a monument for others in the line.

Arriving at Panama, mules and guides were chartered for our passage across the isthmus. Moving in the morn-

ing, under a pouring plumb-down rain, and a Don Quixote ride all day, by novel and narrow channels, through a wild, varying and interesting scenery, we reached Gorgona late in the afternoon, in a very uncomfortable condition. And if, as the Feejee men say, sailors, from long use of salt provisions, become too salt for good eating, it was at this time most thoroughly soaked out. In the morning, by canoes and two or three boats, we descended the river, which is small, and at nine P.M. arrived on board the steamer "Crescent City, Capt. Stoddard, for New York, stopping at Jamaica for supplies. Capt. B. and myself reached home on Sunday morning, sometime in August, and I believe showed the first golden lumps brought into Salem from California; as also two small leather bags handed me in San Francisco, under a verbal receipt, containing each one thousand dollars, one of which was for a New Bedford lady, and one for a Mrs. Smith, of Vineyard Haven. These were placed in the Commercial Bank, until called for.

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